

Town Meeting Coordinating Committee
Minutes for Monday, August 27, 2012, 3:00 –6:00 PM
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Present: Peggy Roberts, Mary Streeter, Melissa Perot, Nonny Burack, Alan Powell, Carol Gray (arr 3:28). Also attending Jeff Lee, Cameron Gray-Lee (arr. Approx. 4 pm).

Absent: Patricia Holland

Peggy called the meeting to order at 3:08 PM.

Audio Subcommittee: Peggy reviewed the minutes of the June 13th meeting of TMCC's Audio Subcommittee. Adrienne Terrizzi will continue to spearhead the effort to improve audio experiences in the Town Room and the Middle School Auditorium. An audiologist from the Clarke School will do a demonstration for the Audio Subcommittee.

Fall Projects:

- The **TMCC/LWV Warrant Review** will be held in the Town Room on November 8. The room is reserved from 6:30 to 9:30. Actual start time to be decided at a later date.
- The **"In-house Warrant Review"** will be held on October 15.
- The Select Board plans to **sign the Warrant** on October 22.
- The first **packet for TM members** will be mailed on October 25.
- The date for a **Bus Tour** will be decided at a future meeting; we should have a better idea of the articles on the Warrant after September 24. Mary will check with Kris Pacunas on the availability of a portable mic or megaphone.
- **Informational Forum** The purpose of a forum is to educate Town Meeting members about issues that may come before Town Meeting. Concern was expressed about reaching TM members who don't often attend TMCC events. Mary would like to see a forum, similar to the meeting that was held for teachers about Health Insurance, at which Stephanie O'Keeffe said they would not leave until everyone's questions were answered. She thought this was a good model to use. Peggy would like to see a meeting on the budget since this is the time for input into the budget. Melissa suggested student housing issues as a possible topic. Carol would like to do a forum related to Amherst being a Green Community. There is a likelihood that further Town Meeting articles may be related to this. TMCC has done a forum in the past on Smart Growth that was very well attended. We decided a forum on "Greening Amherst" will take place on Tuesday, October 30 in the Town Room.
- **Listserv** – As a way to keep TM members informed about zoning issues early in the drafting process Mary forwarded several draft articles to the listserv in July. Revisions are created every 2 weeks but she is concerned about emailing such a large number of files to the listserv. Peggy suggested we ask the Zoning Subcommittee, the Planning Board, and the Finance Committee to create packets of files on the website so these files are available to the public as they view these meetings. Mary will check with Kris Pacunas to see if this is possible and what kind of time commitment would be required. Peggy will call the Chairs of these three committees to see if they are interested in having packets of files for their meetings available on the web for TM members and the public.
- **Guidelines for Presentations and for Amendments** – Alan will make a few revisions to the Presentation Guidelines. Peggy would like to see us develop written guidelines to inform people on how to make amendments to articles discussed at Town Meeting. The purpose would be to help people make successful amendments either in advance or from the floor of Town Meeting. Due to current workload, we decided to revisit this suggestion at a future time.

- **TMCC Website /Listserv** – “Notify Me” Information – Kris Pacunas has asked us to distribute this information to Town Meeting members via the listserv. We agreed. He will need to send us the info electronically.

Dependent Care

Jeff Lee offered a public comment expressing his concern with the recent change in the process for reimbursement for dependent care. He said he was only partially reimbursed. Although he was grateful for the partial amount he did receive, he felt the Town Manager should not have made this change without TMCC’s knowledge or approval. He did not understand Mr. Musante’s reasoning after this option was publicized via the Town Meeting mailing and the website. If there was to be a change, Town Meeting members should have known this before Town Meeting. The committee discussed Town Meeting’s past vote in support of dependent care, which was part of an effort to encourage more people to run for Town Meeting who might not otherwise be able to attend. The committee felt this money should be set aside from a different fund rather than TMCC’s very limited budget of \$300, which has always been used to pay for the bus driver for bus tours, mailing labels, etc. At our meeting in June, Mr. Musante encouraged TMCC to develop a policy and budget for dependent care. Carol is willing to draft policy guidelines and a form and bring it to our next meeting. Alan said there is a certain reasonable expectation from precedent while noting that the present Town Manager is not bound by his predecessor’s decisions.

TMCC Budget – We discussed costs that TMCC has incurred in the past such as postage, labels, postcards, batteries, camera training, etc. We need to clarify whether the Town will pay for postage as it has done recently. Mr. Musante has asked us to develop a budget proposal for the future. Peggy will ask Pat to find out the current cost for a driver for the Bus Tour.

Distribution of LWV *They Represent You* – The League has asked us for comment on how best to publicize the list of Town Meeting members’ contact information. We discussed encouraging them to distribute the information via water, property and excise tax bills, LSSE catalog, *Amherst Bulletin*, rental offices, schools, etc. We especially encourage them to seek to have them distributed at the upcoming Presidential Election in November.

Minutes of June 4, 13, and 25: June 4 and 13 minutes were approved as amended. Revisions were suggested for the June 25 minutes, which will be voted at our next meeting.

Next Meetings – Tuesday, September 4, Thursday September 20, and Tuesday October 2, all at 3:00 pm

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Submitted by Mary Streeter, Vice Chair

Documents Distributed:

Agenda

Minutes for June 4th, June 13th, and June 25th

November 19, 2012 Fall Special Town Meeting Checklist, Revised 6/29/2012

Letter from Stephanie O’Keeffe indicating the Select Boards ideas and Issues concerning Town Meeting, 2 pages

Approved October 2, 2012